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593 family are liable. It is very rare for a woman to be killed in
627 a blood feud. A death is answered by a death; if two persons
682 should be slain for one murder the family which has suffered the double loss endeavours to kill another of their enemies. In
[562] case of wounding, an effort is made to wound the offender, but
[683] if he should be killed his family would try to avenge him. More often, one of the offender's family takes the initiative of offering goods to the injured family, "to cure the wound." If the offer is accepted, and the goods delivered properly, the matter is at an end. If a murder be committed within the ranks of the immediate family, for instance, if a brother kill a brother, revenge, if exacted, must be meted out to the actual
[622] offender. If requested to do so, the leading chief of a village may offer his advice, but it is always considered that revenge concerns only the immediate family.

612 Revenge is a topic which shows clearly the essential fluidity
614 of the family. There are no well-defined degrees of relationship within which responsibility rests. Instead, everyone
[627] knows, in the open life of the community, how many persons
[682] share the family life of the individual, and they alone are held to account, or they alone demand compensation. From its very nature, the family must be a bilateral unit which, when powerful, stretches out to absorb members of the ancestral families of both mother and father.

Not only does the family thus appear constantly to be attracting to itself members of the ancestral family of either parent, but these relatives themselves are deeply interested in the affairs of the family. This is most clearly shown in the case of children who, of course, are members of the ancestral family of both their mother and father. A few days after
553 birth some relative is expected to call together the people of
612 the village where the child is born for the bestowal and valida-
614 tion of an ancestral name. It is considered an evidence of poverty if this is done by the father, as if his child were only
[558] supported by his parents, not by a larger circle of relatives. It is immaterial whether this gathering be called by a relative

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of the father or the mother. In June, 1922, a Bella Coola girl had reached the age of about six months without having received a name. There was much adverse criticism about the parsimony of her father's father and her mother's father, who were held equally to blame, but who had really been deterred by fear of the law prohibiting the potlatch.

As a child grows older he is helped in the performance of ceremonial rites by his parents and by their brothers and sisters. In this, too, it is considered a mark of poverty if only the parents take part. If a man's own children do not appear likely to carry on the traditions of his ancestral family, he has no hesitation in favouring the children of either a brother or sister, since, like his own, they are all members of the same ancestral family. Especially in Kimsquit[11] it is customary for a man to help his sisters' children; not that there is any lack of knowledge of the real father, but rather as a mark of respect and family feeling displayed by a man to his sister. Moreover, in both Bella Coola proper and in Kimsquit, it is most improper for a name which a man has raised to a position of dignity by the expenditure of much goods to be passed to his own son; it should go to a distant relative. When a father validates a name for his child it should be one long dormant.

One aspect of the manner in which the family merges imperceptibly into the ancestral family can be seen in the inheritance of names. When a man calls his relatives together to make his will he is guided in the choice of recipients by the characteristics of his children. An able son receives much from his father, but lazy children are slighted without hesitation. This is particularly true of names with which are bound up valuable dance prerogatives, whereas, as previously mentioned, ancestral names of which the importance depends

[11] According to an intelligent Bella Coola informant, a Bella Bella pays greater attention to the children of his brothers and sisters than to his own offspring, and the same man expressed the opinion that the Kimsquit practice was due to Bella Bella influence. Kimsquit informants denied this, though emphasizing the important part taken by an uncle in obtaining prerogatives for his sisters' children, in some cases to the detriment of his own, which is rare in Bella Coola.

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*556 broader principles of chieftainship. The first essential is to
431 consider the principles of present-giving.

PRESENTS

*556 Consider, for example, a man who wishes to take for him-
431 self one of his ancestral names, and at the same time to display
424 certain features of his ancestral myth—a particular type of house, totem-pole, or dance used by one of his forefathers. He invites guests to his house, displays the feature of his myth, and must give a present to each to show the value of his prerogative and to demonstrate that he has not merely casually usurped the function in question. In giving a present of, for instance, $20, it is as if he said to the recipient:

"See! These are the glories of my ancestors of whom *I* am the descendant. *I* have a part in their fame. To make this valid I give you from my wealth a mere trifle, a matter of no consequence to me, who am so firmly established in the path of my ancestors."

*556 The guest receives the money with mixed feelings. On the
431 one hand he has received $20 as a "present." But if he wishes to elevate his own position and his own prestige, together with that of his ancestors, it is incumbent on him to repay this sum with interest. Contrary to the practice among some other
[171] coastal tribes, there is no fixed rate of interest among the Bella Coola. An ambitious man who seeks to become a chief will strive to the utmost to pay back with heavy interest when he himself gives a ceremony so that his fame will be carried far
● [558] and near. If he should repay only the principal, he would be regarded as having done all that was obligatory, but should he fail to do even so much, he would soon sink to a position of little consequence, no matter how lofty and distinguished his ancestral name might be.

171 In this respect there is a parallel between the Bella
*556 Coola and ourselves. A man invited to a dinner party is not
558 compelled to return the compliment, but if, in the course of

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time, he fails in any way to reciprocate the hospitality, he loses his place among his special associates. So, likewise, the Bella Coola who receives present after present, but fails to give any in return gradually receives smaller and smaller gifts and in time loses his social position and influence entirely. As with ourselves, too, there is a disguised feeling of contempt for the *parvenu*, the man who, lacking the traditional dignity attached to one of the names which came from above at the beginning of time, has elevated the fame of a more recent name by ostentatious giving. But in Bella Coola, as with ourselves, success is the great criterion, and the donor finds his influence little impaired by the lack of one of the ancient origin myths. It is dangerous to cite similarities between the social practices of divergent peoples, and this one must not be stretched too far. The pride of a man in being able to incorporate himself in the traditions of his ancestors is lacking with the host at a dinner party, nor does the latter, to any extent, attain the status of chief through his hospitality. Further, a Bella Coola will sometimes endeavour to shame the poverty of a guest by giving him a large present. Unless the recipient is willing to admit his inferiority he must repay this with a still larger gift. The original donor will then vindicate himself by increasing the value of his next gift until a fierce competition ensues. This feature of rivalry in generosity is rare in Bella Coola, and never reached the same proportions that it did among the Kwakiutl.

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The following is a good instance of the manner in which a haughty man regards the acceptance of gifts. A Rivers Inlet man married a Calvert Island woman who went to live with her husband. The man's mother, to show her amiable feelings towards the marriage, frequently gave thick slices of boned spring salmon, a great delicacy, to the family of her daughter-in-law. The Calvert Island chief considered these presents an insult to him, as if the Rivers Inlet people thought that he and his people were so poverty-stricken they lived on skin and bones. To avenge this slight he made war on the Rivers Inlet Indians and slew many of them. This attitude of the Calvert

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Island chief was felt by the Bella Coola to be quite natural; one of their own chiefs might have resented the insult in the same manner. This account may have no historical basis, but it is a clear example of Bella Coola sentiment.

Further examples may help to clarify this point. A few years ago a number of Kwakiutl Indians visited Bella Coola to perform a mourning ceremony in honour of a deceased Bella Coola who had a Kwakiutl name from his grandfather, a member of that tribe. All the natives were invited to a large house, where the visitors gave a dance according to their own ancestral myths; the songs which were used recounted the history of the Kwakiutl name of the dead man. After thus displaying their prerogatives, they felt themselves obliged, and proud, as hosts, to give presents as validation. The sum of $546 was distributed among the guests. Realizing that it would be impossible to return such a sum by holding ceremonials in Fort Rupert, the home of the Kwakiutl, the leading Bella Coola decided to return the compliment immediately. The amount to be given was discussed at great length. Appreciating the courtesy of the foreigners in thus coming to pay honour to the deceased, it was not wished to insult them by giving a larger present, which would have had the effect of intimating that the recipients considered the $546 a trifling amount. Accordingly it was finally agreed to give the visitors about $300, which was done as validation of a Bella Coola ceremony at which the strangers were present. Thus the hosts allowed themselves to be shamed as a mark of courtesy. Not to be outdone in politeness, the Kwakiutl chief made a speech, expressing his willingness to allow the Bella Coola to drive him (this occurred in the days of horses and carts) to the wharf to take the steamer. In other words, he allowed the Bella Coola to put him in their debt, as they had allowed him and his party to do with respect to the distribution of money. The visit terminated with friendly relations maintained on both sides.

The need of validating every ceremonial act by presents can be further illustrated by the following instance. When

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Poor people, white guests, or others from whom no return can possibly be received, share equally in the distribution; the money goes to all to validate the transaction. On the other hand, X expects that the presents, if any, made to a few individuals after the general distribution, will be returned with interest. In selecting the recipients of these he has been animated, first, by the necessity of repaying old debts, and secondly by his desire to make good investments in the shape of presents to those likely to show their chiefly nature by returning with heavy interest. No request is ever made for such repayment, but as the transaction has been publicly announced, a man fears to fail to repay, since that would lower his prestige. No one may refuse a present, no matter how embarrassing it may be.

After the gifts have been distributed the songs of the initiates are practised. Members of the *sisaok* society join in with the singers; the other spectators listen attentively, full of interest, but take no part. X with his helpers then gives food to all, and they depart.

Before the coming of the white man a potlatch was a rare event, and *sisaok* members were initiated at local gatherings. The period of confinement was the same as that just described, but instead of merely practising the songs during the interval, the initiates appeared and danced to them. It will be convenient here to describe that ritual, emphasizing the fact that at a potlatch, when the initiates can be confirmed in the presence of foreign guests, this preliminary rite does not take place.

After the distribution of goods the singers beat out[18] the tune of any one of the initiates, and all emerge in close succession from the back-room, each wearing a blanket, without distinctive design, a collar of dyed and pounded cedar-bark decorated with pendant weasel skins, and the distinctive *sisaok* head-dress (see Plate 15).[1] This consists of a circlet of grizzly bear claws, surmounted in front by a small forehead mask; from the inner side of the circlet there rise a number of sea-lion

[18] The present tense is used for uniformity.

[1] [See cat. 116, facing p 218 - ANALYST]

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As the dances proceed, those women who have the prerogative for doing so, utter a peculiar droning cry. After dancing, the initiates return to the back-room, where they doff their attire. The ceremony concludes with the distribution of food.

The initiates are now free to leave their place of concealment, as each has become a legal member of the *tsaok* society. Some young men, sons of influential chiefs, are secluded a number of times, others but once. The oftener a youth is secluded, the greater is his prestige, because goods must be distributed on each occasion to validate his name. At the present time, there is considerable uncertainty about the exact details of the ceremony, for it has been so easy of late years to give potlatches that the simpler rite has fallen into disuse; some informants state that each initiate should emerge alone and dance by himself. This concludes the shorter ceremony, but with a potlatch the dancing is reserved until the coming of the foreign guests.

DELIVERING OF INVITATIONS

Returning now to preparations for the true potlatch; it does not matter whether the ceremonies already described are carried out before or after the departure of messengers to invite guests from abroad. Although X usually consults his relatives and friends as to whom he shall invite, this is entirely optional. In giving his invitations X is actuated, first, by a desire to summon those from whom he has previously received hospitality; having accepted presents from them he must discharge the obligations or sink in social estimation. Considerations of friendship also enter into his selection, and he will likewise invite anyone whom he wishes to put to shame by a lavish display of wealth. It is taken as a matter of course that each guest will be accompanied by a number of followers, members of his family, slaves, or adherents.

Acting on X's instructions, a herald invites the people of his village to X's house. X stands up and announces to them

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nature will try to bestow a valuable present. If a man is too poor to give anything, he can avoid the obligation by not dancing when his tune is beaten out. The presents are piled together, and then the host, aided by several important chiefs, distributes them to the messengers, at the same time making laudatory speeches. The chief of the envoys receives more than the members of his crew.

Then the messenger-chief stands up and announces the names of those whom X has invited to his potlatch, using in each case the ancestral designation of the person summoned. Then the envoys, in a body, go to every house in the village. Probably all to be invited are present in the house of the chief, yet the messenger-chief must call out in the doorway of each house:

"Chief So-and-so, prepare your paddles and leave tomorrow."

Early next morning the messengers rouse those whom they have invited and, as a mark of respect, help them to carry their goods to the canoes. There is an attitude of shaming combined with that of deference, since those assisted will have been placed under obligations. They also take to their canoes their own recently acquired goods. Envoys and guests set out together in their respective craft, and only separate as they near Bella Coola.

ARRIVAL OF THE GUESTS

While the canoes containing the first party of guests remain at anchor to wait for high tide, the envoys proceed at once to X's house, now completely redecorated if not entirely rebuilt. Here a huge fire is blazing, and members of the *xaaxk* society are passing in and out, making ready for the ceremony. Both men and women beautify themselves by painting their faces in any designs they fancy, and by combing their hair and placing eagle down upon it. The guests at anchor lay planks across their canoes so as to form a dancing platform. Then, as the tide rises, the singers in the house beat out the tune of

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(11) Dismissal of the supernatural power possessed by the *nusok* initiates, thereby enabling them to return to normal life in the community.

All day, food is being distributed in X's house with guests in almost constant attendance. Not only are large presents of food made to any chief who has previously shown generosity to X, but he also takes this opportunity to bestow insults on anyone from whom he has received the same. Among the Bella Bella and people of Rivers Inlet guests were frequently ridiculed with respect to their habitual diet or mode of life. Unquestionably, the Bella Coola sometimes did likewise, both at potlatches and at *kusiut* rites to which strangers were invited. Although it is dangerous to dogmatize on this point, because the practice has long since fallen into disuse, it appears highly probable that mockeries were less prevalent in Bella Coola than at other places on the coast.

It is comparatively common, however, for a chief to shame a guest by a lavish disregard for valuables. News is constantly passing from town to town, so that the intended victim usually hears what is in store for him. A guest always takes valuable goods with him when he goes to a potlatch, but one who expects to be insulted takes care to have an unusually large supply. The host seats this particular visitor close to the fire, and during the afternoon or early evening he throws large quantities of grease and food upon it, to demonstrate "the warmth" and "fineness" of his house. The guest experiences physical discomfort from the extreme heat, and suffers mental pangs at having a rival boast of his power and fame. To assert his own importance he will throw goods on the fire, as if they were water to extinguish it, and the host will counter by throwing on more valuables. The contest is continued until the goods of the guest are exhausted, or the host fears to burn more lest he should not have enough left to validate the potlatch. He who has destroyed most is considered to have shown his superiority. The Bella Coola state that such rivalry was unknown between chiefs of the same village.

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The following is an account of a feud which took place about 1870: 556* 558 628

The people of *Sauel* had gone to a potlatch at *Tăl'ío* with a plentiful supply of goods, expecting to be insulted in revenge for a slight cast upon their host when visiting *Sauel*. They were allotted places close to the fire, upon which the donor cast a large quantity of oolachen grease until the intense heat almost roasted his guests. Not one of them moved; to have done so would have meant an admission that they were being made uncomfortable by their host's demonstration of wealth by this waste of valuable food. Presently, *Sunăllotle*, the leading chief of the visitors, stood up and called for "water" to douse the flames, meaning goods of equal or greater value, to indicate that he was as wealthy as his host and as little afraid of destroying valuables. His companions threw on the fire boxes filled with skins, but *Sunăllotle* desired still further to demonstrate his prowess. Hastily, he asked some of the other Bella Coola present to lend him a sea canoe (of the large type called *Haidăl*), promising to repay [501] with two of the same kind. The Bella Coola agreed and the craft was carried in, the bearers showing their disregard for the host by breaking his door as they did so. The canoe was thrown on the fire and the flames mounted. *Sunăllotle* called upon his *Tăl'ío* rival to douse that fire. The latter was afraid to do so, being aware that he had barely enough goods to pay his debts at the coming distribution. Accordingly, he tacitly acknowledged the superiority of *Sunăllotle*, who thus rose in public esteem.

It is very difficult to discover just how often such destruction of goods took place. The Bella Coola realize that the prevalence of this practice among the Kwakiutl led to the potlatch being forbidden by law, and are reticent on the subject. Reliable informants agree that it was a fairly common custom in the early days, although it never went to the extremes prevailing at Fort Rupert and Alert Bay, where, too, was common the breaking of coppers in anger, an act unknown in Bella Coola. In other respects, also, the potlatch among the Bella Coola appears to be less important and less complicated in ritual than among the Kwakiutl, so it is highly probable that the above statement is correct. 556* 558 171

Another method of shaming a guest is to serve him, or any member of his party, so clumsily or gracelessly with food that it is spattered over him. In some cases this happens acci- 558 556*

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*556 dentally, but the sentiment is that the guest has been "dis-
*558 tied." To cleanse himself he gives presents to the heralds of his host, and perhaps to some of the latter's fellow-villagers, thus showing that he too is in a position to demonstrate his chief-like nature by a distribution of goods. The host usually takes the hint and is more gracious in future.

A man can render himself liable to ridicule and insult by saying that he is about to give a potlatch, and then failing to do so. Influenced by his announcement, those giving potlatches have skowered presents upon the prospective donor, and if he fails to carry out his plans he will undoubtedly receive insults. Such a man, if he is wise, will carry with him to potlatches large quantities of goods to throw on the fire of his host, or to give to his host's heralds, or to use in both ways.

*556 Thus the afternoon passes. When the people, including those who are not members of the *nusk* society, have assembled in the evening, a dramatic representation of some event connected with X's ancestral myth is common. A similar performance has sometimes taken place as the first event on the preceding evening. The commonest rite is connected with a whale and can be performed by those whose first forefathers came to this earth as whales, or by those whose ancestors obtained the prerogative by marriage with people who owned it. When all are seated, a number of young men rush into the house carrying with them a tree-trunk roughly hollowed out to represent a whale. The cry is raised that the animal is about to vomit, and at the same time large quantities of grease are thrown on the fire by assistants on the roof. The subterfuge is realized by all. None imagines that the whale actually throws up the grease, but the comparison is drawn between the monster voiding grease because it is fat, and a chief throwing away wealth which lesser men would consider of great worth. A display of this kind increases the fame of X, the concept being the usual one, that he has demonstrated his nobility of mind.

Now begins the distribution of the large quantities of goods

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he may now repay with one hundred and fifty blankets. The amount of the original present will be announced, so that it is made known that he is repaying with 50 per cent interest. This completes the transaction. The man who receives the additional fifty blankets is not required to repay these, though he may endeavour to do so, should he wish to add to his own fame. It is sufficient if X pays back the principal only, though in that case he does not increase his prestige. No claim is ever made for the repayment of an investment present; repayment is so obviously to the advantage of the debtor that there is no necessity for dunning. A man who did so would expose himself to the ridicule of the community; it would demonstrate that he thought in terms of goods, whereas a chief is expected to give presents as if they were a mere nothing.

On rare occasions a chief has been unable to repay his investment presents. In the autumn of 1911, a Bella Bella chief, aided by his son, prepared to give a potlatch, and the news spread far and wide. But during the summer the young man accidentally shot himself while deer-hunting. The father realized that, bereft of his son's assistance, he would be unable to repay even the principal of his indebtedness. He wept with grief. A disgrace of this kind affects the man and all who are in any way related to him, so he called upon his relatives, and they gave him sufficient money to save the situation. In such a case, nobody is compelled to contribute aid, but a feeling of compassion is at work, as well as a vague sense of family pride. One Bella Coola gave this chief $10, although all that was remembered about his relationship to the Bella Bella man was that one of his ancestors had married a woman from the village of the Bella Bella chief. Particular inquiries were made to ascertain whether or not the disgrace of failure to repay would fall on the ancestral family and whether they were legally bound to contribute. Such is decidedly not the Bella Coola concept; only feelings of pride and affection govern the contributions. Assistance of that kind is given without witnesses,

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hence repayment or non-repayment does not affect the standing of the debtor in the community. The giver expects no return, but should he come to financial straits he would have no hesitation in asking aid from the Bella Bella chief. He expects, moreover, that the latter will contribute to the expenses of his funeral. This would be optional, as repayment of a non-ceremonial present concerns the donor and recipient alone, without effect on the status of either in the community. In this instance, if the old man had died soon after his son, his debts would not have been paid, since there were surviving no immediate relatives. Sons or other near kinsmen always settle the debts of dead parents out of family pride, but it is considered most improper for the creditors to think about repayment. By giving they have shown their power, the question of return is the concern of the family of the deceased recipient.

Very rarely does the donor of a potlatch fail to return his investment presents except through oversight. In spite of every precaution, errors occur, and these are said to be caused either by a supernatural being, itself invisible, rising between the donor and his guest, hiding the latter, or by *Snuqualnkaiste* stealing away his thoughts. Unless the donor wishes to insult a guest, he will give him presents later on, and that ends the matter. But if he does not do so, the slighted man may return the insult, and thus feuds are often generated that may lead to war between tribes. About 1860 it is said that a conflict between the people of Bella Bella and Rivers Inlet was caused in that way. In the autumn of 1921, a Bella Coola chief insisted on dancing at a Bella Bella potlatch, although it was commonly known he did not have the necessary goods for distribution to validate his dance. The hosts waxed sarcastic, taunts were answered by taunts, and only the presence of some white men prevented bloodshed. Relations between the two tribes are still strained as a result of this incident. The Bella Coola chief was subject to spells of insanity, and danced during one of these. According to the

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Bella Coola, the Bella Bella should have taken this into account, along with the man's generosity on previous occasions, and overlooked his remissness.

Cases have been known of a "stepid" man endeavouring to increase his prestige by giving many potlatches when unable to pay his debts. Such a one is laughed at for his stinginess, which is not the attribute of a chief, and is given only small presents.

It must be clearly understood that debts publicly incurred, in other words investment presents received at any ceremony, must be publicly returned, if the debtor is to gain the public esteem granted to one who pays back with interest. But everyone cannot give a potlatch; hence any young man desirous of returning his obligations, and of rising in public favour, can do so at a potlatch given by somebody else. Guests are present from abroad, so his discharge of indebtedness is made known farther afield than if he had done so at a local gathering, and the donor has the additional satisfaction of being able to give to these strangers. Sometimes as many as ten young men will ask X for permission to pay their debts at his potlatch. Such is never refused, because it means more ceremonial, and greater interest, which indirectly increase X's prestige. A young man who has been taken to a foreign potlatch as an adherent of a guest always receives presents, and if he repays these with interest his name begins to become known, especially as his return payments are unexpected. It is thus that a man whose chiefly name (or names) has been dormant for generations, can begin to restore it. Thanks to presents he gives at X's potlatch, he will in return receive large gifts, until finally he is able to give a potlatch himself. After X has paid his own indebtedness the debts of others are settled. In each case the speaker announces the amount received on such and such an occasion and the amount returned. Thus all present are able to estimate the generosity of the payer, a chiefly attribute. When a young man plans to give his first potlatch it is customary for the older chiefs of his village to advise whether he has

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42L sufficient goods, though every man is understood to be master
556 of his own affairs.

After paying his debts X still has many heavy expenses in connection with the *nusul* initiates, and the young people for whom he is obtaining seats. Goods for these purposes have been put on one side. The remainder he now proceeds to give away as investment presents. His exhibition of ancestral prerogatives, and the guise in which his ancestors are now living, as eagle, raven, whale, or such like, have been duly validated by the presents given on the preceding evening, and his social status has been cared for by the payments to his craftsmen and other creditors. These investment presents are not ceremonial, though a man always endeavours to give them, both for economic and social reasons. There are no definite laws regarding their distribution. X is guided in his choice of recipients[1] by the following considerations:

(1) If a certain *chief* is likely to give a potlatch soon he knows that a present given him will be returned with interest.

(2) He desires to give something to a *chief* from whom he has often received favours.

(3) He wishes to ingratiate himself with a powerful *chief* by presents.

42L (4) He wishes to give presents to a *chief* with whom he is
556 not on friendly terms. Unless the latter reciprocates, it will be considered that X has shown his superiority.

#551 (5) Usually an important *chief* will receive more valuable presents than one of lesser rank. This custom is not governed by any fixed scale, and an important *chief* may be deliberately slighted, if X thinks that he has not shown him, X, sufficient respect.

It is considered the height of folly to give presents without due regard to their return.

The amount of gifts depends entirely on the wealth and desires of X. If he wishes to increase his fame, he will endea-

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[1] Only one present is given to each man, irrespective of the number of names he may have. The *Kwakiutl* use word to give a gift for each designation.

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wear to give valuable presents, but he need not give any. It is a deep disgrace to any man to be unable to return these presents. Nothing is said, nor does the donor take active steps to receive his returns, but the influence of the recipient perceptibly wanes. It is expected that a heavier rate of interest will be paid on presents received many years before repayment, but again this is a matter of individual volition. The debts of a man who dies while owing for goods received at potlatches are scrupulously discharged by his family. If they fail to do so, their own influence is lessened.

One method of reducing the value of an investment present can be used by a man who finds unable to repay a large gift. The uncle of an elderly Bella Coola was once guest at a Kimsquit potlatch, where he received, as an investment present, a fine large canoe and two hundred blankets. Not wishing to incur so large a liability he at once returned fifty of the blankets to his host for distribution among the guests. Consequently, he was expected to make return for only one hundred and fifty blankets, with whatever interest he desired. This action tended to lower his prestige, since it acknowledged his inability or unwillingness to repay his present. The chief in question, being firmly established in his chiefly status, did not fear to do this, though one of lesser rank would have hesitated to confirm his inferiority.

It is on the value of the goods distributed in these three types of presentation, namely, recompense for work done, repayment of debts, and investment presents, that the importance of the potlatch, and consequently of X himself, is virtually judged. These distributions of presents are for the potlatch as a whole, including the return of the dead and the intangible prestige of X; the directions which follow are to validate specific transactions which can be omitted. In one or two families the whole course of the potlatch is changed, since the members have the prerogative of distributing their presents outside the house. In such a case the giving is done during the day instead of at night. Details of this ritual,

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aim by repeating loudly a few words, or even phrases, from the speeches being delivered, or calling on the audience to notice what has just been said and to listen attentively. A white man would be annoyed at such interruptions, but the Bella Coola consider them evidences of attentiveness.

The making of comments is a duty performed at every type of ceremony, but it is indispensable at potlatches; since a chief depends on the heralds to emphasize and explain the points of his family history which are being displayed. One intelligent man likened their functions to a compass, constantly guiding the course of ceremonial life. Without a herald a chief would be as useless as a ship tossed on the ocean with no hand to steer. Although the principal duty of heralds is to extol the actions of a chief, they can, and are expected to, deride one who fails to carry out the customary requirements. Cases have occurred in which influential men have so far forgotten their function of generosity as to fail to invite their fellows after killing a deer or other large animal; or women have declined to share their abundant berries. Nothing is said at the time, but when next the people have come together for some ceremony, a herald refers to the omission under so slim a disguise that everyone is aware of his meaning. This public ridicule lowers the prestige of a chief to such an extent that he is careful not to offend again. Not many years ago, a certain Kimsquit chief failed to ask others to share some mountain goats which he had killed; at the first opportunity a herald referred to himself as Tsâ'i, Mountain Goat, and all present realized that he was really alluding to the one who had been remiss.

Heralds must exercise care in their witticisms at the expense of chiefs because, unless public opinion is with them, the point of the remark is lost, and they expose themselves to the wrath of the person offended. Nevertheless, heralds always strive to cause merriment, and often take risks with this aim in view. They try to make humorous remarks, and also to cause amusement by their antics. As already described, the donor of a potlatch may throw to one of them a dish containing liquid food

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435 owner with a statement of its history and the amount expended
437 on it. The purchase of a copper is, therefore, a good business
* 556 transaction, and it might be assumed that a chief with keen
commercial instinct would endeavour to acquire as many as
[171 possible. This is said to be the case in Fort Rupert, but in
189] Bella Coola public opinion is averse to the obtaining of coppers
unless for use at potlatches. As every ambitious chief hopes
to give potlatches, he can always claim that the acquisition of
a copper is for this end, and that the sale of it is from a kindly
desire to assist a fellow-chief who is nearer the desired goal
than he himself. Consequently, the sale of coppers is tolerably
common, and a chief is not considered to be mercenary unless
he sells too frequently.

426 The intending donor of a potlatch can now proceed to the
* 556 ceremony, secure in the possession of a copper worthy to be
thrown on the fire after the passage of his deceased relative.
In addition, he may own another copper of too small value for
this purpose. As described in the last chapter, he repeatedly
calls together the inhabitants of his own village to rites which
he validates by the distribution of presents, and at which he
also gives away investment presents. He may decide to use
his second copper for this purpose. All investment presents,
[556] which are given only to men of standing in the community,
must be repaid with interest unless the recipient is willing to
decline in popular estimation; but when a gift of this kind
consists of a copper, a return of 100 per cent is expected on the
transaction. Retrieval of a copper in such circumstances is not
spoken of as an investment present, *dzilakuxsdze*, but as
dzaxayf, which has the definite significance of something that
must be returned with 100 per cent interest. If the value of
the copper were $25 before this buying, it is now $50, since
the new owner must repay this amount to the chief planning
to give the potlatch. The new owner can use the copper in
any way he desires; if he repays a previous indebtedness, he
cancels $50 by giving it; whereas if he buys it as *dzaxayf*,
announcement is made that its value is $50, and he expects to

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her husband's critics by taking this name for herself when she rebought herself from him. 551 578

Na'aas, "The Inhospitable One." Her husband received this reputation owing to his wife's manners, so she advertised what had been said about him.

Naphâlsîtâs, "Heedlessly Deaf." This woman's mother-in-law claimed that she deliberately failed to hear what she was told to do, and applied the above epithet to her. The daughter-in-law confounded her by taking it as her own name. [606]

When a name of this type is assumed it is always announced when, where, and for what purpose it was first created. 553

A description has already been given of the actual ritual by which X bestows the goods acquired from the repurchase of Y, but it is necessary to enlarge on the prohibition against their use for the direct benefit of one of the children of the couple. The theory is that the goods bind the marriage contract and express in a practical and lofty form the kindly sentiments with which Y's relatives regard her husband, and the bond between the two families, hence they must be used solely for the benefit of him and his relatives. A man usually applies these goods to initiate the children of his brothers or sisters into the ranks of the *ssaak* or *kusiut*. It is unthinkable for goods to be delivered without an exposition of Y's family's glories, but if this should ever take place, there would be no difficulty in applying them to the direct benefit of her children. When used, for example, to make a child of X's brother a *saaak*, he is a living testimony of the noble way in which Y's relatives have done that which is fitting for the family of her husband. Due to accidents in announcing and storing of presents, it sometimes happens that those obtained by the repurchasing of Y are used for the benefit of her own children. Unless this error is corrected, the child could always be shamed by having it said: 556 583 [558]

"You are a mere nobody. The goods expended in the

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556 583 repurchase of your mother have become nothing beneath your feet."

When such an accident occurs, the relatives of X take some [558] future occasion to give presents to validate his child, with the announcement:

"The goods used from the repurchase of his mother have become nothing beneath his feet. We hereby supply that deficiency."

Thus it is demonstrated that the relatives of both parents are interested in his welfare, so that his path is clear before him.

553 556 583 Many women are only repurchased once, but an effort is made to do this frequently since the more times, the greater her prestige. After several repurchasings it is felt that the names and other prerogatives "dragged across" by Y have become valueless. But since new names have been taken to her husband on each occasion, the marks of friendship between the two families are still plain. Then it is that those first transmitted can be revived by relatives of Y, unless, of course, X has validated them for his children. If there is only one repurchasing, the names remain the definite property of X. This is not a clearly formulated law, merely a sentiment that the earlier names have been covered by those later given, and that accordingly Y's relatives, having done what was proper, can now use the titles once more. There is a constant interchange of names and privileges between families related by marriage.

556 583 [182] It is virtually impossible to over-estimate the importance of this rite of repurchase among the Bella Coola, one of the few customs preserved tenaciously amid the ruins of their ancient culture. The writer was forcibly struck with the following instance which occurred while he was in Bella Coola:

About fifteen years before, a young man and woman had married with due formality. After three children had been [586] born, the mother took to drink and vice until her husband at last repudiated her, retaining possession of the children. The woman, weakened by disease, divorced by her husband, and

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588 it, although it is customary for the parents of a wife to exhibit
556 their wealth on several occasions.

What are the advantages of such an agreement to the two parties? The husband receives considerable assistance, both in actual goods and in ceremonial prerogatives. Moreover, his vanity is gratified by the desire shown by others to have him as husband of their daughters. The advantages to the wife are more difficult to describe. Financially, her relatives always lose, yet they consider that the prestige gained by their daughter as wife of a mighty chief fully compensates for their monetary loss. Accordingly, they take pains to have a daughter married several times before puberty, either simultaneously or [595] in succession. Thus there is a form of ceremonial polyandry existing in Bella Coola at the present day. No ceremonial marriage takes place after puberty. In later years, when the [554] wife grows up, marries, and has children of her own, their status is increased materially by the pre-puberty marriages of their mother. They address her fictitious husband as "father," and his children as brother or sister, although there are no incest prohibitions with regard to them. A chief sometimes arranges the bestowal of names or other prerogatives on the children of a fictitious ex-wife, but such favours are too uncertain to provide a motive for the prevalence of the rite. Its value rests on the esteem attached to a woman whose relatives have shown their wealth and prowess by marrying her several times. When her children quarrel with their playfellows, it is common to hear one boast:

"*I* have three fathers. How many have you?"

[558] Occasionally the relatives of a fictitious bride are unable to provide the goods to repurchase her from her husband and the girl remains disgraced for life. In no circumstances has her husband any claims to marital rights with her, and in due course she can marry someone else; but it is never forgotten that she was not rebought from her husband. In 1916 a girl about four years of age was married to a man of sixty, who at the time gave her relatives $80 and a motor boat. She had

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[The Cannibal Dance]

if the latter agrees to undertake the commission, he must next obtain a slave, a matter of no difficulty if he is at all wealthy. An effort is made to find a victim from the tribe that has committed the murder, though any alien will suffice. The details are worked out with great care so that the slave is sent to the river for water, or on some other errand at the time the call comes to the Cannibal. A shout is raised, and the uninitiated hurriedly run out of the house, followed by the dancer and a body of athletic *kukusiut*, who pounce on the unsuspecting foreigner. The Cannibal cuts his throat, and the corpse is carried back to his house, where all members of the society are assembling. Part of the body is cut off, then the *kukusiut* accompany the Cannibal to every house of the village. He carries the mutilated remains, and the uninitiated readily believe that he has devoured the missing portion. The corpse is later dismembered and the bloody pieces displayed, convincing proof of the gruesome meal. It is needless to say that they are carefully buried where there is no danger that they will be found. The rite then proceeds in the usual manner.

If two biting Cannibals, or their parents, quarrel, they may be shamed into killing and "eating" a slave. Angry words lead to insults, insults to scorn at each other's prowess, until one of the Cannibals throws a stone at the feet of the other, an action which has the significance of:

"Eat that!"

Since a stone is always symbolic of a slave, the Cannibal so taunted knows what is expected. If he accepts the challenge, he throws a stone at his adversary's feet, bidding him do likewise. The one challenged soon receives a call and kills a slave in the manner previously described; his rival must do the same unless he is willing to admit himself outdone. The occasional killing of a slave under such circumstances does not give to either the right of doing so habitually. Of course the challenged individual is not bound to accept, but if he declines the "dare," he sinks in popular estimation. This

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*533 [776] [424]

(d) A somewhat boastful reference to the power of the dancer's *tutwinam*.
(e) Another arrogant reference to the *tutwinam*.
(f) In Bella Bella.
(g) This is a Bella Bella being of whom little is known by the Bella Coola. The right to use him as *tutwinam* came from a remote ancestor.
(h) Presumably, the dancer's right to perform.

Fragment of a Song Used for Kaqaix, a Kimsquit Man(a)

A Alqumaxwin	*maxlixwimaxp*	*Sakxnxndmsta*
Protect your faces,	you quiet people!	Is always shooting arrows

kwalnxtsiyadsisis
my crest(b).

[WORDLESS CHORUS]

B and *C* have been forgotten.

[WORDLESS CHORUS]

Axwaixa	*kxsElaxwamdisisid*
Don't do that,	they will cover us with valuables(c).

(a) Recorded as song VII D 29b, National Museum of Canada; singer, Jim Pollard. This song is said to be an extremely ancient one, used by some of the earliest settlers; the tune is said to be entirely different from any recent *nusal* compositions.

[424] [825] [773] (b) The dancer's crest was the wasp, an insect which is believed to sting by the discharge of invisible, minute arrows. This admonition to the guests to hide their faces was, of course, a boasting reference to the goods which would be distributed at the approaching potlatch. None of the first settlers was sent down to earth as a wasp, but several, including *Nxnkila*, were guided and assisted by these insects to such an extent that they have been regarded as crests.

[558] [424] (c) It is customary, when quoting this song, to add this final remark. It is related that, many years ago, a Kimsquit man used his wasp prerogative, but was shamed at the potlatch by being inundated with goods from a rival. Since that time, none of his descendants has dared to use the right and the admonition against doing so has become almost proverbial.

Fragment of a Song Used for Nuqwilxmisis of Kimsquit(a)

A Xwaxqilkwaxa	*xtalqalxwildai*	*Dilqwalqalxdai*	*nuxtaqtaxil*
We all go	to see(b).	He(c) informs us	of what he carries.

B and *C* No more of this song is remembered, though it was used at a potlatch about 1910.

(a) Recorded as song VII D 29b, National Museum of Canada; singer, Louis Hall.
(b) Meaning: To gaze upon something supernatural.
(c) An unnamed supernatural being.

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(a) Recorded as song VII D 28a, National Museum of Canada; singer, Jim Pollard. The tune is said to have been handed down for more than two hundred years. 533*

(b) That is: Let us stop paying the customary respect to.

(c) It is not remembered which chief was thus held up to the scorn of his fellows.

(d) That is: He does not act in accordance with the traditions of the name he uses.

(e) That is: The dancer is feeble. This refers to another *nusqwal* dancer who, owing to his poverty, had not performed for many years. It is not known whether he was the same individual as the one derided in the first part of the song. [558]●

(f) To flaunt another's poverty in his face is the height of Bella Coola rudeness. [735]

(g) That is: He, too, was a *nusqwal*. [576]

(h) The ancestor from whom the prerogative was derived.

(i) That is: In virtue of my *nusqwal* ability. This appears to be a departure from the usual theme of a mocking song.

Nusqwal Song Used for Ẍuiststikh", a Kimsquit Man(a)

A Tuhsdjidjsdumalnuwit	*yqhuiststikhwaudai*	*sha'anuidyenmixwalx*	
Please do not sleep,	Ẍuiststikh"(b),	listen to your	

nuwlaqstinuxwalx
drums(c).

[WORDLESS CHORUS]

B Lamxwaudjaxsda	*nuyaiyaiwaitalx*	*ahahowaqaiaudai*	
I alone	am content(d);	is increasing	

aiyadiqaltlaaxdai
my prerogative(e).

[WORDLESS CHORUS]

C The third part has been forgotten.

(a) Recorded as song VII D 29a, National Museum of Canada; singer, Jim Pollard.

(b) It is not uncommon in *nusqwal* and *a'alt* songs for the dancer to address himself in this way. [575]

(c) That is: Be ready to listen to drums beaten at one of your ceremonies.

(d) The dancer is deriding another *nusqwal* who has not performed for a long time. [558]

(e) This song differs slightly from the usual mocking type in lack of specific references to the person derided; lack of reference to an ancestral myth, however, shows that it was not composed for a potlatch. [556]

Song of a Kimsquit Nusqwal(a)

A Dipsaqa	*Ẍalhalaix*	*skaxtlaayaxs*	*dilxut*
That is he,	the impotent,	the chief	of the paddle(b).

[WORDLESS CHORUS]